1:Arensberg & Kimball E-5 (1932-1934) 1940
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476 The commonest form of coöperation is that which in-
246 volves lending a boy to a "friend" whenever he is needed. In order to illustrate this form of coöperation and to give the setting in which it takes place, it will be well to describe the hay harvest in a country district. We choose the district
[471] of Luogh. Luogh is a mountain region of small holdings, none of them larger than twenty-five acres, divided among twenty-four households. There was only one large farmer in the immediate vicinity; he worked his lands through a herdsman and, as he had his own hired hands, did not figure in the haymaking. All the rest of the holders had what is called "general purpose land" by the Land Commissioners; they had some bog, some meadow, several fields being grazed over, and a garden of potatoes, rye, cabbage, and oats, always less than an acre in extent. The number of cattle each had ranged from six cows, two calves, and two bullocks held by one holder with sixteen acres of mountain land and an addition about three miles off in fertile bottomland (he had got this, eight acres, several years before from the Land
[737] Commission) to none. The person having no cattle was an old bachelor, an old-age pensioner, who lived by himself on a farm of four acres stocked only with a few hens.

476 The hay was early, the weather favorable, and the harvest
246 began in mid-July. All the holders except two were Luogh
621 people related by complicated ties of blood and ancestral
589 association to the land and to each other. There were three lone bachelors, a widow helped by her brother, and three widowers helped respectively by one son, three sons and a daughter, and two sons. The other holders were married couples with each a son or two and perhaps a daughter present, if they were old, and many growing children if they
[167] were not. The region was one of large-scale emigration, so that a smaller number of young people were present than is
476 perhaps usual.
246 As the hay ripened and the weather turned fine, the fami-

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CHAPTER VI

Demography and Familism

161 OF the demographic phenomena the small farmers present, the decline of population is most easily isolated. The facts are as follows: There has been [73] a continuous and characteristic decline since the great famine of 1845. Numbers have fallen from 6,548,000 in 1841 to 2,963,000 in 1926. With the exception of Dublin, the whole of the country has suffered in this decline. On the whole, however, the country districts have suffered at a greater rate than have the towns. In 1841, 80 per cent of the population was rural; today only 63 per cent. In other words, since 1841 there has been an almost continuous increase in the town population at the expense of the rural, though the two have shared a common decline. Put in terms of percentages: since 1841, the country districts have lost 64 per cent of their population, towns from 200 to 500 49 per cent, towns from 5,000 to 10,000 25 per cent, and towns other than Dublin over 10,000 13 per cent. Dublin, on the other hand, has gained 47 per cent. That the enormous [167] emigration associated with this decline is a matter of the contemporary generation is evident when it is recognized that 30 per cent of the native-born Irish were living in other countries in 1926.

161 The closest approach among European countries is the 171 case of Norway, where 15 per cent live outside. Italy, which has provided so many citizens for the United States and the

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Argentine, has only 4 per cent of its natives residing in foreign countries. Since 1911 there has, however, been a check in the decrease; only 5 per cent of the population was lost between 1911 and 1926. The region of our investigation, County Clare, shares in this general loss, falling in population from 250,000 in 1841 to 95,000 in 1926. Since 1911 it has lost only 8 per cent.

As the statistics show, this loss of population is in the main a problem of the country districts. The towns have gained proportionately to the countryside; though in a lesser degree, they have, of course, shared the common loss. Many causes for this decline have been operative and, as the excellent work by Dr. William Forbes Adams, *Ireland and Irish Emigration to the New World*,[1] shows, emigration is no new factor in Irish life. The great impetus for an enormous exodus of population was the famine of 1845, but since then emigration has flowed on continuously, coming to an end only in 1932 when for the first time for at least a century more Irishmen returned than left the country.

But far from the famine's having started the emigration from the present Free State, "the growth of emigration between 1815 and 1845," concludes Dr. Adams, "not only made possible the flight after the famine, it caused that flight. The thirty years before 1845 spread the emigrating spirit through all but the highest class until it became the favorite remedy for hard times. The tremendous rush of the next fifteen years could not have taken place without aid from the earlier emigrants." Since then, the land agitation, dissatisfaction with British rule, and periodic hard times have taken their toll, coupled with what Adams calls the greatest single cause of human migration, the work of powerful interests developed first in the early days of Irish emigration, "organizing and developing (immigrant) traffic for their own profit." The movement began long before

[1] New Haven: Yale University Press, 1932.

1:Arensberg & Kimball E-5 (1932-1934) 1940
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167 the great burst of the fifties and has been continuous ever since.

167 178 241 Many attempts have been made to find causes for this emigration. Perhaps the most successful have been those dealing with economic factors. Among the most frequently suggested is the change in agriculture since the famine. The assumption advanced is that the change from tillage to livestock production has cut down the rural employment, which in turn has driven the rural population to emigrate. Undoubtedly, there has been a correlation, particularly in the earliest years and at the time of the land clearances after the famine. In fact, from 1847 to 1852 (the famine years) there was a huge decrease in the area under small holdings of 1–30 acres, a decrease of 1,395,000 acres, but since then, in the years from 1852 to 1909 (after which holdings began generally to be increased), the corresponding decrease was only 155,000 acres.

The Report on Agricultural Statistics, 1847–1926, published by the Free State Department of Agriculture and Commerce, from which the figures are derived, comments that "this comparatively small transference of land from small holdings with high densities to larger holdings with low densities had but little effect upon reducing tillage or increasing livestock," [2] the agricultural changes which are supposed to have affected emigration. The Report demonstrates that between 1854 and 1912 the smaller the holding, the larger the increases in densities of all livestock, except dry cattle two years old and over, and the larger the decrease in density of ploughed land.

In other words, the change in agriculture, whatever may have been its effect upon employment prospects for the small farmer outside his own farm, proceeded more rapidly on the small farms. The tables of the Report show that large farmers decreased their tillage at a more rapid rate than

[2] *Agricultural Statistics, 1847–1926*, p. xliii.

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small farmers only in the periods of 1917 to 1926 and 1854 to 1874, while continuously over the whole period 1874 to 1926 small farmers "got out of tillage more rapidly than large farmers." Too close appeal accordingly cannot be made to changes in agriculture for an understanding of Irish emigration.

In fact local densities of population do not now and never have shown a great deal of correspondence with densities of tillage. The highest percentage of agricultural land ploughed (29 per cent) was reached in 1851. Since then it has fallen steadily, to 13 per cent in 1926. Sweden comes nearest to this low percentage of tillage, with 52 per cent of her arable land tilled. Consequently, the Irish population was at no time solely dependent upon tillage crops.

Before 1881 a correlation could be drawn with some accuracy between the decrease in tillage and the decrease in rural population. Thus in poor law unions (administrative areas) in which ploughed land decreased population also decreased as shown in Table 1.[3]

TABLE 1

RELATION BETWEEN DECREASE IN PLOUGHED LAND AND DECREASE IN POPULATION

Decrease in Ploughed Land (per cent)	Decrease in Population (per cent)
0–20	13
20–30	26
30–40	28
50 and over	34

But since 1881 similar tables show that there is no correspondence between the decreases, and that even those poor law unions in which tillage has increased show an ordinary loss of population. Consequently, decline in tillage had little effect upon emigration after 1881. This becomes even more evident when it is understood that in both 1854

[3] *Ibid.*, p. lxi.

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and 1912 the thirteen counties densest in rural population included only six of the counties densest in ploughed land. "Dense tillage was in the east, dense rural population in the west," [4] as it still is.

In the same search for economic causes, a better case has been made for the change from milch cattle to beef cattle production. As we have seen, milch cows are characteristically associated with the small farmers. During the period of emigration, the number of dry cattle has risen in proportion to the number of milch cattle almost steadily; the range is from 2,372 total cattle to the 1,000 milch cows in 1854, to 3,334 to the 1,000 in 1926; fluctuations have been very slight. It is true that the number of milch cattle has also risen steadily, if slowly. Such a change in actual numbers of cattle and in proportions of dry to milch cattle, the latter capable of yielding the greater amounts of food for farm consumption, may have had some effect upon the displacement of human beings by cattle, but certainly not a great enough one to determine the emigration. The lack of correspondence between these changes is evident when it is remembered that the change has taken place principally in the former tillage areas, and also that in 1926 the areas of greatest milch cow density were substantially the same as in 1854. The very little direct correspondence there can be is well exemplified in the contrast between County Clare, which fell from a population of 336 to the 1,000 acres of crop and pasture to 129, while milch cows remained practically the same in number (100 to 110 to the 1,000 acres), and County Mayo (a poorer region), where population fell only from 375 to 245 and milch cows also remained practically the same (90 to 100).

From these figures it is evident that the decline in rural population is not directly correlated with decline in tillage or change in cattle production. The failure of employment

[4] *Ibid.*, p. lvi.

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coincident upon that change cannot be assigned as the sole cause of emigration.

As the decline in population has been more characteristic of the small farmers, it may be possible to associate it with social conditions pertaining among that class. They have participated in the very agricultural changes which are thought to have caused their dispersal. They enjoyed the high prosperity of the closing decades of the last century, and won the progressive reforms of agrarian tenure. Yet they continued to send forth thousands of emigrants. Fluctuating economic conditions have undoubtedly had their effect, but factors whose greatest demonstrable result is merely to stay or hurry the stream of emigration cannot be evoked as efficient causes. In taking the problem directly to the small farmer, it will become possible to sketch the social setting in which emigration takes its form.

Clearly connected with the decline in population are other demographic statistics, particularly those of marriage. They present features which are unique among civilized peoples. Inasmuch as they are again indications of an underlying uniform social pattern whose occurrences they record, it is necessary to analyze them in terms of the behavior patterns of rural Ireland. Like emigration, they are more characteristic of the country people. Springing from marriage, they are thus directly indicative of social forces within the small farmers' family economy.

Briefly stated, they present the following characteristics: In Saorstat Eireann in 1926, according to the census then conducted, there was a larger proportion of unmarried persons of all ages than in any other country for which records are kept. Marriage, furthermore, did not take place until a comparatively late age. Thus 80 per cent of males between twenty-five and thirty years of age were unmarried in 1926, 62 per cent of males thirty to thirty-five, 50 per cent of males thirty-five to forty, and 26 per cent of males fifty-five to

593 578 428 daughters with two hundred pound fortunes, settled three sons and a daughter with her husband in each of the farms. Pat himself, the eldest, now about eighty, got the largest farm but not the one he wanted. He has been warring with his brothers and his neighbors ever since. He held out against his father for five years, refusing to marry and take his farm. In Pat's youth, land agitation and reform had not yet prevented subdivision and acquiring of new farms by a successful tenant. Pat on his fifty-acre mountain farm has married off a daughter locally at three hundred pounds and sent two sons out to America. Another daughter works in England. Two sons, aged forty-three and thirty-six, are at home and Pat hasn't made up his mind yet which one shall get the land.

593 167 The examples, various as they are, need not be multiplied. The sons and daughter who are not to be portioned at home, in the words of the Luogh residents, "must travel." To that end both the savings of the family, created through their united efforts under the headship of father and mother, and [583] the incoming dowry, are devoted. In Luogh there had been only four marriages in ten years; two of them were the usual farm-transferring matches, one a returned emigrant who married a boyhood sweetheart and bought a farm, and one a widower who took a second wife and a second fortune. An old woman described the situation: "There aren't any matches nowadays. Nobody has a fortune to give his daughter and the young men must travel." Yet the woman who [454] lamented this state of affairs was carefully husbanding half crowns for her baby granddaughter's fortune.

593 167 457 434 Nevertheless this necessary dispersal of the members of the family at its reorganization does not ordinarily destroy the family ties. The bonds of affection and family obligation still hold. If they have emigrated, the family members send back remittances and passage money for nephews and nieces and brothers and sisters left at home. A great many farms, especially in West and North Clare, are partially supported by Christmas gifts from Americans and other exiles. It is

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unfortunate that the authors have not statements of the amount of these annual remittances for local districts. The total for Ireland, however, is enormous. There is a marked tendency for emigration from a local region to perpetuate itself, sons and daughters of each generation going out to join the members of the last. One district round Cross to the west of Carrigaholt, a little settlement on the Loop Head peninsula which juts out from Clare into the Atlantic at the Shannon's mouth, said locally to be supported by sons in the Shanghai police force. The first to go became chief of police in the International Settlement there, and many places in the force have gone to men of Cross.

The authors had the opportunity of examining some of the family setting in which emigrant remittances operate in Luogh. There the greatest number of emigrants had gone out to Boston. In one family, there was a succession of nephews and nieces following uncles and aunts from the same farmhouse for four generations. In four recent cases Luogh boys and girls had married one another in Boston. In two more they had married in Ireland and emigrated together.

Remittances from sons and daughters arrive around Christmas. In one family the farmer's wife had written to children in America saying that the family were trying to acquire an addition to their holding from the Land Commission. The children sent them the purchase price. In this case the daughter sent her regular Christmas remittance as well. When she was admonished by her parents for such generosity, she wrote: "I would think it wasn't Christmas and I hadn't any father and mother if I didn't send them something."

Her mention of the festival in the same breath with her parents is understandable when it is realized that Christmas is the family festival *par excellence* in Ireland.

The role played by emigrated relatives in providing for

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the children upon the home farm and the role of the dispersed children in helping the old couple and the brother or sister at home is part of the general "friendliness" by which the Irish countryman sums up the family obligations. The two roles are felt to be the same, and they are described in the same terms, as the obligations of actual charity between country families, agricultural coöperation, and ceremonial assistance at marriages, wakes, and funerals. Brother and sister send back gifts to the home farm, especially when the old couple are still alive. Gifts of money, clothing, and presents of all descriptions are sent back. Geese, farm delicacies, and such mementos as shamrocks go from the farm to those relatives that keep in touch.

At family crises, such as death, marriage, and birth, the new bonds come strongly into play and, where possible, the dispersed relatives come back to the farm at that time. The emigrant returns, if he does so at all, to the very townland of his birth, either to buy the old place or to settle near-by. In fact, there are many instances of countrymen, returned Americans, Australians, South Africans, and British soldiers, who have roamed over the world but have never seen more of Ireland than their route to and from their port of embarkation and the nearest market towns.

The sentiments of place, farm, and family become so inextricably intermingled as to be almost one. Perhaps the peculiarly Irish type of song and music owes its character as well as its popularity to that fact. The laments for a dear one, especially a mother, and the pangs of exile are the major motives. They are sung to the same tunes and call forth the same tears.

The break-up of the family at the transfer of land has changed the relation between the dispersed children and the old couple, just as it has changed that between the new farm family and their parents. Control of expenditure, in fact all vestiges of the strict parental control, is perforce

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It has already been pointed out that the census figures available at the time of the fieldwork on which this book is based are those of the Irish census of 1926. Since that time some at least of the figures based on the succeeding decennial census, that of 1936, have become available. There are also a number of annual statistics which bear on the questions of Irish population. It is interesting to turn to these for the light they throw on subsequent development in the trends we have noted.

The release of the 1936 census figures in 1939 showed conclusively that the demographic trends that have marked Ireland since Famine times continue to persist. Neither the years of the establishment of the Free State up to 1932 nor the years of depression, economic war, and the experimental programs of the De Valera regime since then have affected the trends. Any of the charts prepared for the 1926 figures needs only to be extrapolated along the trend line a few points to show the situation of ten years later.

Stated briefly, these trends recapitulate and reëmphasize the points we have already made. Emigration continues to mark the life of the country, draining the countryside first into the towns and second overseas, now to Great Britain rather than across the oceans. Ireland continues to hold its record of possessing the highest percentage of unmarried men and women in the world. The population over sixty-five years of age continues to rise. The population of children continues to fall. Marriages continue to be fertile, by comparison with many other countries. But they still tend to become fewer and fewer, and the delay of marriage into middle life grows longer and longer. The ratio of females to males continues to fall, until in 1936 there were 975 males for every 935 females in Ireland, the lowest sex ratio in Europe and one of the lowest in the world.

These figures mark the continued existence of the familistic order we have discussed. They mark as well the continuance of its struggle to fit modern life. Perhaps a figure

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182 when we discuss shops, pubs and fairs. In either
602 of these cases, the kinsmen, the dispersed children, remain within the confines of local life.

● 167 The new equilibrium has a place even where
602 emigration removes the dispersed children alto-
182 gether. The behaviours and sentiments of kinship 'travel' with them. They send back remittances and passage money for nephews and nieces, brothers and sisters. There is a marked tendency for emigration from a local region to perpetuate itself. Sons and daughters of each generation go out to join the members of the last. One little settlement called Cross, on the Loop Head peninsula which juts out from Clare into the Atlantic at the Shannon's mouth, is said locally to be supported by the Shanghai police force. The first man to go is now Chief of Police in the International Settlement there, and many places in the Force have gone to men of Cross.

Such services are part of the same 'friendliness' which sums up the kinship system. And naturally, where kinship is based upon extension, bonds are stronger as the original relationship is closer. Thus a brother is more likely to aid one's self and one's children than is a cousin, though the obligation binds them both. An incident from Luogh will show the human setting in which emigration often takes place. The farmer tells the story himself:

"A fellow named O'Dwyer married to a cousin of the old woman's out of Ballyheline (a neighbour-

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ing townland) was home from Australia one summer, looking a fine cut of a man with a great new coat and a fine hat on him. I saw him one day when we were all in Considine's shop for the old-age pension and knew who he was from the pictures of him. (After they had established recognition and struck up a friendship) he asked could he take the boy (my second son) out to Australia with him, and he would put him behind his bar (he had a hotel out there). I said yes, he could have him.

"After this fellow went back to Australia, he sent over £50 for passage for Seumas. But didn't Seumas' sisters write from Boston and they swearing that if I let their brother go off from them to Australia I'd never hear from them again. So Seumas went out to America to his sisters. I sent back the £50, and sure wasn't it the devil's own work sending it back."

So much for the external change which the match brings. What now can we learn of the internal change and the new internal equilibrium that change brings?

The transfer of the land to the son who marries carries with it a drastic reformation in the relations of the household members who remain. The headship of the parental couple is profoundly modified. The 'old people' move into a new status, that of old age. For both the man and the woman it means an abandonment of power; they are no longer the 'man and woman of the house'.

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182 Yet, all this is still a primary social adaptation. It is not reasoned; it is made up of the habitual face-to-face contact of human beings and the folkways of the community. Yet, neither does it shut out reason; there is ample play for wits, for intelligence and for self-interest. For there is certainly nothing remote, esoteric or formal within this frame. There are no rules to learn that the countryman does not feel within himself or his fellows.

This rural familism is based upon psychological and physiological realities. Within it, the drives of the human animal find satisfaction. Hunger, reproduction, love and anger, domination and submission—all have a place. But these satisfactions, as you can see, are far from being haphazard. They are carefully patterned and controlled. The conditioning the countryman receives is personal; it is a conditioning to other human beings. It is part of an intricate web of human relationship. It is a balance of personalities in movement, crystalline at moments, fluid at others, and transformed when necessary in regular and orderly fashion.

• 167 In the light of a rural life which can be looked upon as a whole system, the peculiarities of Irish population figures take on meaning.

The Free State exhibits a very interesting and peculiar demography. The statistics of population in Ireland are startling, in many ways. Long-

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continued emigration has brought about an enormous decline in population, at times when most other nations have been increasing rapidly. The enormous exodus which followed the Famine was only the high-water mark of the tide of emigration. The outward flow began long before the Famine and has continued down to the present. Only in 1932, in a time of world-wide depression and immigration barriers, did it come to what may be an end. For the first time for well over a century, more Irishmen returned to their native land than left the country.

Naturally, after so long an emigration, this outward flow of population had become a permanent condition in the life of the nation. In 1926, the census-takers reckoned that 30 per cent of all native-born Irish were then living outside the country of their birth. Put in more intimate terms, this meant, roughly, that every child growing up must expect to see at least three out of every ten of his playmates and companions go beyond the seas. And unlike the Greek or the Sicilian, and many another national, he could not expect them to return. He must lose them permanently.

But this three out of ten is an unfair representation. The country districts have suffered this loss at a much greater rate than the towns. On the whole, the towns have gained over the countryside. The cities, as everywhere else, have swollen at the expense of the rest of the country. The countryside has been the victim of two enormous drains—one

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167 the normal, small farmers' flow from country to town—the other, overseas. As this group, the small farmers, is overwhelmingly the most numerous in the land, the drain has taxed it most.

582 But the small farmers, the country-people, are the very group who exhibit most strongly another statistical peculiarity. They set the norm for the country in marital statistics. In this, the Irish Free State occupies a unique place. Marriage takes place at a later age than in any other country for which records are kept. Sixty-two per cent of all males between the ages of thirty to thirty-five are still unmarried. Nor is it only the men who escape matrimony so long. Forty-two per cent of all women who reach that age of middle life are single. In the United States, in England, in Denmark, in all other countries in fact, there is no such long delay in marrying. In all three of the countries named, comparative figures for both men and women do not reach 25 per cent. Only in Ireland is a single man or woman of thirty the rule rather than the exception.

But it is not a question merely of the Irishman's hanging back a little longer from an inescapable fate. For a surprising number escape altogether. One man out of every four men who reach fifty in Ireland is still a bachelor. And though the women have slightly better luck in finding mates, the same figure holds for them.

Other countries usually delay marriage longest in the urban professional classes. But in Ireland, it is

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the country-people who marry latest. One can range the country in something of a scale in this regard. The more numerous in a county the numbers of small holdings, roughly, the later marriage takes place, and the greater number of bachelors, particularly males, of all ages, there are. Late marriage and bachelorhood are characteristics today of the countryman's way of life.

In the problem presented by these statistics, the structural approach to the countryman's way of life can bring a new illumination. It throws into relief the human setting in which economic and historical changes have run their course.

After the terrible disaster of the Famine, agriculture underwent a change. Canadian and Argentine wheat forced Irish land into cattle production. The great land clearances took place, turning out the population to make way for pasture. Then the small farmer followed the large into pasturage for dry cattle, on a lesser scale, and the milch cow declined. Small towns and crossroads distributing centres and the railroads sprang up all through the country; and abroad, the roaring industrial expansion, first of England and then of America, gave opportunities denied at home. Through all this: through curtailment of employment at home, through substitution of cattle for men upon the land, through denial of local opportunity, the stream of emigration kept its steady flow.

Through all this, too, the figures of Irish mar-

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riage kept pace. Age of marriage was normal in the year of the first census. In 1841 there was a normally low percentage of the unmarried in the population, and men and women married as early as they do in the United States today. At each decennial census afterwards, marriage was a little later and the unmarried a little more numerous. Through all the welter of changes, the figures grew steadily toward wider and wider spread celibacy.

Then when the economic and political tides turned, the human setting still endured. The clearances ceased; land reform won security of tenure; years of prosperity after 1870 brought an income that could be used more and more at home, as lowered rents spread and freehold was assured. Finally, the war brought undreamed-of prosperity and on its heels the strength for revolution and civil war. The milch cow came back to a position from which it had only retreated very little; dairying could be organized and come to vie with beef cattle as a market outlet. Finally, as a last step, industry began to make its call at home.

In all this flow of circumstance who can say what factor determined the numerical count of Irish population? Emigration went on as before, checked this year, hurried the next, until, perhaps from external check, the flow grew less and less.[1]

[1] Preliminary reports of the current (1936) census indicate emigration still continues, though now largely directed toward Great Britain rather than overseas.

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On the other hand, the corollary check on the population—late marriage—did not lag. It still grew. In the census of 1911 it reached its peak and has held it since. It alone shows no sign of falling-off in response to new economics and better days. For a social system is no brittle, changeable thing. Its adjustments to change and circumstance are a lesson, not in economics, but in the tenacity of human sentiment and human habit. Late marriage in Ireland can be associated with the reluctance of the old couple to renounce their leadership. It is part of the long struggle to acquire means to portion children. The closed corporation of the family cannot be dispersed until it is possible to establish a new one. The self-sufficiency of the group makes it always difficult to destroy. And now, today, the identification of a single family with a single individual farm prevents the setting up of more than one new group upon the land.

So, when subdivision of holdings ceased after the Famine, Irish familism made its adaptation. The local community could not any longer settle its sons at home; it could no longer divide its land among them. Yet, unless it were to die it must live on. I say must, for a social system is co-extensive with the lives of its members. The Polynesians, in their island paradises, might die out nation by nation when their culture crashed, bled by a malady stronger than foreign germs or foreign guns. The Irish countrymen were tougher.

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In living on, the system could still mould the lives of its members. As prosperity arrived, and land agitation fixed the attention of the farmer, 'land' became more and more a central value. Irish rural familism felt more and more strongly the threefold identification of 'land', 'blood' and local standing. Where land, alliance and prestige all follow the same lines, in marriage, the group finds its coherence in, and centres its tightly woven bonds round, that crucial reorganization of social life.

So, the 'landless' and the 'backward' must die out. In rural Ireland, however, it is not men but families which are so forced to their deaths. "Backward places do not grow big fortunes", we remember. That homely phrase is full of social meaning. The all-too-human drives for social rise, for prestige, leave them behind and marriageless. And in a familistic world, celibacy leads to extinction.

With the homely phrase we enter a new field in social life, yet one just as central to the way of rural Ireland. This is the broad area of social stratification. Under the awkward term are subsumed the judgments man makes among his fellows upon rank, upon prestige, upon inferiority and superiority, and the behaviours that embody them. All societies exhibit them; all organize them in one way or another. Even the animals show analogous behaviours. They practise dominance and submit

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train. The finder of the 'crock of gold' is stricken down in the flush of discovery; the townsman who rises too high and waxes too arrogant in his wealth may soon be stricken, too, and his family and its shop or public-house seems mysteriously to melt away.

Nor is this the only instance in which the social order overlies the economic form of debt and shapes it to its purposes. The debt, like the dowry, can and does become a measure of status, too. It is a sign of one's ability to support that network of social obligation which gives one's self and one's family a place in social life. In this fact, too, lies 'confidence'. The debt descends with the land or the shop from father to son. It moves onward with the progression of the generations. Many a small farmer pays off bit by bit the family debt of a parent or relative. Social obligation, in which pride and sentiment are involved, long outlives the statute of limitations. In this disposition, religion, sentiment and custom coincide. Many a shopkeeper till recently has assisted a boy or girl to emigrate, in the sure knowledge that his or her remittances would eventually reach his money-till.

In the days of the British, a Royal Commission found itself mystified by this so-called 'honesty'. The debt to the landlord, in the form of rent, seemed to them an honest debt. Yet the countryman, often as not, scorned honesty in that direction; though he might bend his last efforts in what

10: Browne D-5 (1893) 1894
ER6 Rural Irish ER6
Inishbofin

(3). Vital Statistics (General and Economic).

161 (A.) *Population.*—The population of these islands, though still dense, is, like that of the rest of Ireland, steadily decreasing, though in this case the decline is of recent date compared with many other parts of the country.

161 Between the years 1851 and 1871 the population had increased from 1047 persons, occupying 196 houses, to 1262, and 251, respectively. ●167 Some time after 1871, however, emigration began to take a sensible effect; and between that year and the census of 1891 there has been a loss in people of 20·99 per cent., and in houses of 11·55 per cent. That the decrease is entirely due to emigration is proved by the returns of births and deaths for the decennial period 1880–1890, in which time the births exceeded the deaths by 89 or 38·7 per cent., the respective numbers being births 230, deaths 141.

161 The Table given below shows the population of the islands at each census since 1851, with the number of inhabited houses, average 592 number of inhabitants per house, and of acres per head. It thus indicates the period at which the decrease began, and the amount of congestion of the district, both past and present. This congestion, however, must be greater than what the figures show, as under the heading of Inishbofin are grouped some fifty-four other islands or islets, all uninhabited, and varying in size from seventy-four acres downwards. Some of these are utilized for grazing by the people of the two larger islands, but a large number of them are quite useless, being mere barren rocks.

Census.	Population.	Houses.	Inhabitants. per house.	Acres per head.
1851	1047	196	5·34	3·00
1861	1236	239	5·17	2·55
1871	1262	251	5·03	2·50
1881	1166	250	4·67	2·70
1891	997	215	4·64	3·10

161 That the overcrowding is, even now, great, will be seen when it is considered that the density of population per square mile is 202, whilst that of the Aran Islands is 171, of the county of Galway 86, and of Ireland, as a whole, 146.[1]

[1] In the Parliamentary Gazetteer of Ireland (1846), the population of the islands in 1831 is given as 1462, number of houses not given; population in 1841 as 1612, houses, 285. The decrease afterwards is evidently due to the famine in 1847.

10: Browne D-5 (1893) 1894
ER6 Rural Irish ER6
Inishbofin

The distribution of population, inhabited houses, and out-buildings in 1891, was as follows:— 162 592

Islands.	Area.	Population.			Houses.	Outbuildings and Farmsteadings.
		Persons.	Males.	Females.		
	A. R. P.					
Inishbofin, .	2312 1 16	874	450	424	194	123
Inishshark, .	581 1 30	123	61	62	28	14
54 other islands,	257 3 35	—	—	—	—	—
Totals, . .	3151 3 1	997	511	486	*222	137

It will be seen that the male population exceeds the female by 95, the cause evidently being the greater emigration of females than of males. 162 167

The drain does not seem to have affected any one class of the males (as regards age) more than another, as the number of men between the ages of 20 and 60 is 203, or slightly more than one-fifth of the whole population.

Since the census was taken some slight change has occurred, for, according to a return obtained on the islands, there are now 186 families on Inishbofin, and 26 on Inishshark, being a loss of three families since 1891. A larger number of young people than usual is also said to have emigrated since then. Many of the older men state that emigration has taken away the finest men from the islands, especially Inishshark, and say that formerly the stature of the men was greater than it is now. I must say, however, that those of the elder generation still remaining are not as a rule better built or taller than their sons and grandsons. [142]

(B.) *Acreage and Rental.*—The total area is, as stated above, 3151 acres, the valuation of which, including houses, land, &c., is £572 6*s.* 423 311 A very considerable proportion of the surface of the islands is commonage, the exact amount and distribution of which I am enabled [435]

* Of these, 215 were inhabited.

10: Browne D-5 (1893) 1894
ER6 Rural Irish ER6
Inishbofin

monotonous chant of three or four lines; the last phrase of each line was very often *go deo deo-deo* (= for aye, aye, aye), the vowel sound of *o* easily accommodating itself to the prolonged chant. Another termination was *nios-mó-mó-mó* (= no more, more, more). I still recollect one touching line of the dirge: it was—*tá mo theachín follamh go deo-deo-deo*, 'my little house is empty for evermore, more, more.' Unfortunately, I know nothing about music, but the chant reminded me of the fourth line of the old air of 'The Blackbird.'"

Owing to the stone of the island not being easily worked the gravestones are usually rough, shapeless slabs, or are rudely chipped into the form of a cross, while the rest of the grave is covered with flat stones.

A large number of the men formerly went as harvesters to England and Scotland, where some of the young girls still go as servants; but very few do so now, though they say the harvesting paid well. It is more the fashion now to go to America even for a few years; and instances have occurred of people shutting up their houses, leaving all their furniture and utensils as they were, going off to the United States for three or four years, and then coming back, resuming possession, and falling into all the old ways and customs as if nothing very unusual had occurred. It is quite a common occurrence for young men to go to America for seven or eight years (generally to the neighbourhood of Pittsburg to work at the foundries there), at the end of that time to return home, settle down, and get married. Many of the girls go to Scotland, as servants, for five or six months of the year to assist their parents at home.

3. *Food.*—The dietary is much more varied than that of many of the inhabitants of the inland districts; it consists largely of fish of various kinds, potatoes, and home-made bread. Flesh meat is rarely tasted except at Christmas or some other great occasion, when a little mutton may be eaten, but fowl and geese are occasionally used. The fish which forms the staple of the diet is eaten fresh in spring and summer time, and large supplies of it are salted and dried in the sun for the winter's use; the kinds cured are mainly ling, sea-bream, and glassan.

Butter and cheese are not used; and eggs, though forming part of the regular food, are mostly employed as a purchasing medium for tea, sugar, tobacco, &c., at the principal shop, whence they are forwarded to Westport.

Tea has come greatly into use, and is taken in large quantities with

11: Browne D-5 (1894) 1895
ER6 Rural Irish ER6
Kilmore

(x.) *Analysis of the Statistical Tables:—*

141 The variations in type in the inhabitants of the different parts of the district are shown by the following Table, which appears to corroborate the belief entertained by the people that the men of North Inishkea are taller than those of the South Island or of the Mullet. They also show the greater proportion of light hair in the islanders:

	Mullet.	North Inishkea.	South Inishkea.	Portacloy.
Number measured, . . .	35	8	7	12
Cephalic Index, . . .	79·5	78·4	80·1	80·0
Stature, ...	1704 (5 ft. 7 in.)	1727 (5 ft. 8 in.)	1705 (5 ft. 7 in.)	1727 (5 ft. 8 in.)
Proportion to stature—Span, .	104·55	102·45	103·58	105·65
,, ,, Hand, .	11·34	11·04	11·41	11·41
,, ,, Forearm,	15·47	15·60	15·32	15·57
Nigrescence Index,[1] . .	62·30	10·5		77·52

Though the people in all sections of the district are seen to be mesaticephalic (if two units be subtracted to reduce the index to cranial standard), yet in two, South Inishkea and Portacloy, there is an approach to the brachycephalic form. None of the men measured in either place are dolichocephalic, and in most cases the cephalic proportion inclines towards the higher index rather than to the lower.

It would appear also that the North Inishkea men are shorter-limbed than any of their neighbours, as out of the four cases met with in which the span (*grande envergue*) was less than the height, three were from this island.

3. *Vital Statistics* (*General and Economic*):—

161 (A.) *Population.*—Erris is not now very thickly peopled, the general decrease affecting the population of Ireland during the last ●167 fifty years having especially affected this district.

The census returns show a constant and steady decline since 1851, the slight increases which have from time to time occurred in some

[1] Not taken from number measured but from nigrescence cards.

11: Browne D-5 (1894) 1895
ER6 Rural Irish ER6
Kilmore

townlands having only been temporary. That this loss is entirely due to emigration is proved by the returns of births and deaths in the registration district of Binghamstown for the decennial period 1884–1893 in which space of time the births numbered 1260, and the deaths 707, an excess of 553, or 22·7 per cent. The following Table, which refers only to the parish of Kilmore, shows the population of the district at each census since 1851, with the number of inhabited houses, average number of inhabitants per house, and of acres per head.[1]

Census.	Population.	Houses.	Inhabitants. per house.	Acres per head.
1851	7379	1106	6·67	3·99
1861	6452	1243	5·19	4·57
1871	5552	1054	5·27	5·31
1881	5327	911	5·85	5·53
1891	4111	694	5·92	7·17

The density of population is thus seen to be about 89 per square mile, but varies with locality, being greatest on S. Inishkea, where it is about 304.

The town of Belmullet, which is not included in the table given above, has fluctuated much since its foundation in 1825. In 1831 its population was 585, and it continued to increase until after 1851, when it had attained its maximum of 935; from that time forth it declined. In 1861 its inhabitants numbered 907; in 1871, 849; in 1881 there was a slight increase, 852; and at the last census, in 1891, the population had fallen to 652.

It was difficult to lay down any exact boundaries to what, for the purposes of this report, is termed the Portacloy district; but the three townlands—Srahataggle, Portacloy, and Curraunboy, from which most of those measured at Portacloy came, have been taken to represent it; in these the population has not undergone the same change as that of Kilmore, the population having risen since 1851, from 248, inhabiting 46 houses, to 299 in 53 houses.

[1] In 1831 the population of Kilmore Erris was 9287.

11: Browne D-5 (1894) 1895
ER6 Rural Irish ER6
Kilmore

is concluded. The burial grounds are kept much better than in many other parts of the West; and on Inishkea, as well as in the Mullet, it it is customary to decorate the graves with large white pebbles, and to place at the head a neatly made wooden cross. A curious custom exists, some instances of which were observed at Tarmoncarra, of placing tobacco pipes on the graves; these are the pipes which were left unused after the wake. What the reason is for so placing them could not be ascertained, but it is considered extremely unlucky to remove them.

Unbaptised infants are interred in separate burying grounds by themselves, several of which are in the district.

It is now no longer customary for the people of the Mullet to bury their dead in Inisglora, the last instance of this having occured over thirty years ago. Formerly many families used regularly to make use of this island as a cemetery, always taking a body over from a point of the mainland opposite, which was stated by tradition to have once been connected with the main, but to have got separated afterwards by a channel which has gradually widened.

Maxwell,[1] writing in 1832, says—"There are no people on earth more punctilious in the interment of their dead than the peasantry of this remote district. A strange and unaccountable custom exists of burying different families resident on the main in island cemeteries, and great difficulty and often great danger attends the conveyance of a corpse to its insulated resting place. No inducement will make these wild people inter a body apart from the tomb of its fathers, and, if a boat will live, the corpse will be transported to the family tomb. At times the weather renders this impracticable, but the deceased is kept for many days unburied in the hope that the storm may subside; and only when frail mortality evinces unequivocal tokens of decay will the relatives consent to unite its dust with the ashes of a stranger."

A considerable number of migratory labourers leave this district annually to do harvesting work in England, on the proceeds of which work they in part support themselves during the winter. The number doing thus has decreased somewhat of late years.

There is not much to be said about the everyday mode of life. The men fish and attend to their holdings; the women manage household affairs and assist at field work in times of pressure. The people are early risers in the summer months, and, as a rule, retire to bed early, few lights being seen in the hamlets after nine or ten p.m.

[1] Maxwell, W. H., "Wild sports of the West," chap. XIX.

12: Freeman K-5 (1954) 1958
ER6 Rural Irish ER6
Inishbofin

[p. 202(B)]

121 IRELAND'S decline in population has been made possible by the availability of work elsewhere for her people. This article deals with one of the poorest and most isolated districts of the country, an island off the west coast which, for over 60 years, has received government help in various forms, as well as money from relations in America and in Britain. And the island, Inishbofin, has a reasonably contented community not untypical of many in the west of Ireland, all of them Roman Catholic in religion and depending on the priest for the main leadership. Emigration continues, but those left behind and those who return to the island have a leisured way of

*The material for this paper was partly collected during a visit with the Geographical Society of Ireland in July, 1954. The author visited about half the houses on the island of Inishbofin, and for one-quarter of the 96 households recorded the numbers of the household, information on those who had emigrated, the area of the farm, number of stock, methods of selling produce, and other sources of income, such as fishing or work on the roads. Within this range the answers were generally reliable, but no direct financial inquiry would be fruitful and on Inishbofin the number of sheep was almost invariably understated as there are jealousies between households about the use of commonage (see p. 205). In one case a farmer told the writer that he had "half-a-dozen sheep or so" but the following morning he had 23 lined up in his field for the dealer to see. It was impossible to resist the comment over the garden wall, "A fine lot of sheep this morning."

Other aspects of Inishbofin are discussed in three articles in *Irish Geography*, Vol. 3, 1956, pp. 123–135, by J. P. Haughton, T. Jones Hughes, and J. A. K. Grahame.

[p. 202(c)]

121 living rarely encountered in the modern world. As will be shown later, however, the island people maintain their simple but not uncomfortable way of living only by help from outside: if [433] one believes that every inhabited area must make its economic contribution to the state, Inishbofin is a debtor on a considerable scale.

167 "A small and dwindling population maintain a precarious existence on the 657 Atlantic fringe of our industrial society and present upon the whole an aspect of decline and, in some parts, of dereliction." In these words the Scottish crofting report[1] names a problem, com- [659] mon alike to the Atlantic fringe of Ireland and of Scotland, which was investigated by two Congested Districts Boards, in Ireland from 1891–1923[2] and in Scotland from 1897–1911[3]; in both countries the powers of these boards were transferred to the general administration of agricultural affairs. One by one the islands off the west coast of Ireland are being abandoned[4] but on Inishbofin this prospect does not seem immediate: past and present government assistance has resulted in a planned

[113] [1] Department of Agriculture for Scotland, Report of the Commission of enquiry into crofting conditions. H.M.S.O., Edinburgh, 1954, Cmd. 9091, para. 281, p. 87.
[2] For a general treatment, T. W. Freeman: *Geogr. Rev.*, Vol. 23, 1943, pp. 1–14.
[3] Cmd. 9091, 1954, para. 265, p. 81.
[4] T. W. Freeman: *Geogr. Journ.*, Vol. 120, 1954, p. 332.

167 657 landscape combined with financial help of such varied forms that one may see the welfare state in action. Inishbofin, four miles beyond the coast of Connemara [131] (10° 10′ W. to 10° 15′ W.), is separated by a strait almost one mile wide from the nearest inhabited island, Inishark. Some of the neighboring 311 small uninhabited islands are useful sheep pastures and others merely reefs 132 dangerous to shipping. In calm weather these islands rise above deep clear waters, but in storms Atlantic waves send spray to a height of 300 feet and more[3] and a dangerous swell sweeps through intricate channels. The inhabitants, farmers and farmer-fishermen are at the mercy of the weather. In 1954 the dry spring resulted in a short growth of oats and barley straw and a feeble growth of potatoes; the fishermen's lobster pots were swept out to sea, replaced and then swept out again; and the hookers could not be taken out in waters always dangerous but vastly more so when the weather consists of an apparently endless series of deep depressions.

505 Isolation is a major problem, but on four days a week in summer and three days a week in winter a hooker runs from the pier at Cleggan to the island, where it is rarely able to berth at the pier, so that all passengers and goods must be put over the side into a curragh and rowed ashore. In winter the island may be storm-bound for as much as a fortnight at a time, and almost [261] every household has a bag of meal kept for such an emergency. Special arrangements have to be made for the shipment of cattle; fish can be taken for sale to the mainland in rowing boats only during favorable weather; and no eggs are sold owing to transport problems [137]

[3] On the cliffs of the island the vegetation is halophytic and consists generally of a low sward of seapink (*Psamma maritima*).

000 problems. The range of commodities
433 available on the island is restricted. But the farms are similar to those in Connemara, and the fishing—especially for lobsters—may in some years be distinctly profitable. Peat is still available and no coal is imported. Once the peat is used up, it is hard to maintain existence on these remote islands. And if the population diminishes to very small numbers, its very maintenance may become precarious or impossible as on Inishark (p. 208). Inishbofin's
434 present population is maintained partly
657 by the help of various government schemes, by the remittances of relatives,
167 or—in comparatively few instances—by periodic spells of residence in England to make money as laborers or domestic servants. Incidentally, the
[191] people are entirely English-speaking: the Irish speech was lost almost 60 years ago.

291 Home spinning and weaving of fab-
438 rics is now extinct. In 1893, it was noted that most of the clothing was
[286] made from "homespun and home-dyed woollen fabrics" but that "imported shop clothes of inferior quality" were replacing them.[8] Inishbofin people have no longer the homespun clothes still worn by the people of the Aran islands in Galway Bay: only one old woman was seen in the traditional red skirt (or petticoat) dyed with imported madder. Clothes are now bought in the local shops, or during occasional visits to Clifden, which is "town" to the islanders, or to Galway, or from mail order houses in Dublin. Even a journey
484 to Clifden involves seven miles in a hooker and seven miles along a road with no public conveyance, and Galway
[491] is a further 50 miles by bus as the light railway was closed in 1925.

[8] C. R. Browne: The Ethnography of Inishbofin and Inishark, County Galway. Proc. Royal Irish Acad., 3rd series, Vol. 3, 1893–96, p. 354.

[p. 203(B)]
[Text continues on p. 204(B)]

12: Freeman K-5 (1954) 1958
ER6 Rural Irish ER6
Inishbofin

[861] sixteen are in a similarly formless cluster.

● 167 161 Emigration has entered deeply into the fabric of life: in 1841, Inishbofin with Inishark had 1612 people, but ten years later there were only 1047. A rise to 1236 in 1861 and 1262 in 1871 was followed by a drop to 997 in 1891, when there were 215 families of whom one-quarter were said to be "very poor."[18] Steadily the population declined, to 510 in 1936, 406 in 1946, and 341 in 1951, and now less than 300 (including 40 in Inishark). One-quarter of the families were interviewed in 1954; of these only one-third were "normal families" of parents with children. In the school there were only 29 children aged 5–14, whereas the normal figure would be 48. On Inishark there are now only nine able-bodied men, six of whom are needed to man a boat seaworthy in winter, with the result that an epidemic might be disastrous. Permanent emigration to Britain, or, if possible, to America, is favored by the young and adventurous. Even in 1893 seasonal emigration to Britain as harvesters or domestics was declining,[19] though a number of people went to America for several years, saved money, and returned to the islands. A large proportion of the people have spent several years in the United States. In many cases a family has its older relatives in America, its younger ones in Britain.

Conclusion

657 Having reviewed the economic geography of this island certain conclusions emerge. First, the present relative comfort of the population has been made possible only by past and present government assistance bestowed with lib-

[113] [18] Congested Districts Board, Base Line Reports, Clifden district, 1891.
[19] C. R. Browne, *op. cit.*, p. 353.

[p.208(B)]

657 erality. Houses, farms more than twice the size of those normal before the days of the Congested Districts Board, doles to those needing them from November to April, subsidized schemes of building walls that seem in places scarcely necessary, and no direct taxation—all contribute to the general social welfare. In addition the family allowances and old age pensions help in many households, but these are general state benefits. During the winter many householders are short of money, once the money for the stock has been spent.[20]

167 Second, emigration has been of vast benefit to the community; money comes 434 in to most of the homes from America[21] or Britain, or both. And emigration has made possible the making of farms which, with the use of commonage, can hardly support a family in comfort but can give basic sustenance; though, as more and more farms are united, some men will prosper, especially those who fish as well as farm.

443 Third, it is regrettable that the lack 489 of commercial facilities means that eggs, poultry, butter, and other produce cannot be sold; in many parts of Ireland the sale of eggs to grocers and milk to

[273] [20] The consumption of stout at the only inn averages eight barrels a week in summer, but only [804] three barrels a week in winter. The standard content of a barrel is 256 pints.

[291] [21] Many of the children are dressed in American clothes.

[p. 209(A)]

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

VII

FURNITURE AND FITTINGS

GOOD craftsmanship in wood is so rarely seen in the Irish peasant house that one easily notices a piece of quality furniture. The chances are that it has come out of 'the big house' or, near the coast, from a wrecked ship. Very little oak furniture has survived from the days before the famine, and what there is is likely to be of bog-oak, that is timber dug out of the bogs. The truth seems to be that by the time improved styles of furniture and settled conditions of life had come about, in the second half of the seventeenth century, the native oak-woods had been almost everywhere destroyed, and the common furniture came to be made of bog wood or imported soft woods. The gentry favoured mahogany. Already in the early seventeenth century Ireland was importing pine wood from western Scotland,[1] and during the eighteenth century it was the returning timber ships from Newfoundland and Nova Scotia that initiated Southern Irish emigration to the New World.

No doubt this lack of good quality peasant furniture may be partly attributed to poverty, and to the recurrent famines, of fuel as well as food, which brought despair and led to the burning of furniture. But it also reflects the weak tradition of built-up furniture among a people predominantly pastoral and to some extent nomadic. Certainly degrading poverty and insecure tenancies did not provide the means of support for skilled craftsmen: yet in Wales, where conditions under an

[1] H. G. Graham, *The Social Life of Scotland in the 18th Century*, 4th ed. (1937), 196. On bog timber see A. T. Lucas in *Béaloideas*, 33, 71–134.

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

WEDDINGS AND WAKES

The Irish birthrate remains high, and despite delayed marriages the population would continue to increase were it not for emigration, latterly to Britain instead of America. Moreover, sterility is still regarded as a disgrace, and superstitious practices find one of their last pathetic appeals in attempts to be cured of 'the sterile curse'. Among a peasant people a childless marriage is an economic and social tragedy. There is some evidence that, in the north of Ireland at least, trial marriage or bed-fellowship (bundling), as in Wales, the Hebrides, Norway and Holland was an accepted preliminary of marriage and a means to which the fertility of a prospective partner was tested. The reliability of the notorious Richard Twiss as a witness may be impugned, but in this instance his account of the custom in Co. Fermanagh is likely to be true[1] since there are living traditions of trial marriages in Counties Antrim and Londonderry.

For the most part, these immemorial attitudes did not survive the crisis of the famine and the watchfulness of a now well-organized priesthood. The fertility rites of wakes for the dead and the unashamed courtships which were carried on at patterns and at the great seasonal festivals find a plausible explanation in the fact that they occurred at times and places where the spirits of the dead were waiting to be reborn. The gatherings at hill-top burial places attested by tradition and the legendary histories were similarly drawn together by the pull of ancestral spirits. The name Dermot and Grania's Bed which is applied to many megalithic graves gives these ancient monuments a reputation which is evident in a belief recorded by Hely Dutton in Co. Clare early in the last century: 'If a woman proves barren, a visit with her husband to Dermot and Grania's Bed certainly cures her.'[2] And the Saints' Beds associated with many ancient church sites have taken over some of the megalithic magic, for they have the power of curing of barrenness a woman who spends the night there.

If the youthful marriages of pre-famine days seem far removed from the carefully arranged matches of the present-day peasantry, it should not be concluded that they were casual and

[1] R. Twiss, *A Tour in Ireland in 1775*, 103.
[2] H. Dutton, *Clare*, 318.

15: Fox E-5 (1962) 1963 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
Tory Island

[P.153, C]

551 and the names of her husband, *e.g.* 'Máire Ní Dhubhghain
[585] bean Shéamuis Mhic Ruadhraigh'—literally, 'Mary, daughter of Doohan, wife of James the son of Rory.' A number of circumstances will determine whether or not her husband's name will 'stick' as a surname or whether she will go on being known by her maiden name. These names in their full forms are only used on ceremonial occasions such as dances—when a man or woman is called upon to sing or step-dance—, or for prayers in church during a serious illness, or for calling the roll in school, or for putting on a tombstone.

551 The practical names are the rough English equivalents
191 of the Gaelic names, used in dealing with English-speakers generally and particularly for use when working in England
● 167 and Scotland. The Government is usually dealt with in English for several reasons, mainly because although the
464 islanders all speak Gaelic as their native tongue, the language they read and write is English—a situation brought about by the pattern of migrant labouring which forced literacy on them when working in Britain. Also they find 'Dublin' or 'civil service' Irish difficult to follow. Most islanders, then, have an 'English' name. Our examples would be 'Paddy Rogers' and 'Mary Doohan' to the outside world. Sometimes these names stick and are used amongst the islanders rather like nicknames. Usually the English version is a rough phonetic equivalent of the Gaelic—Ó Duibhir becomes Diver, Ó Dubhgain becomes Doogan or Duggan, Mac Fhlaithbheartaigh becomes MacClafferty, etc. Sometimes this is abandoned and an English name taken for its 'likeness' to the Gaelic as with MacRuadhraigh and Rogers—Roger being the English name most like 'Rory.' The name Fíoruisce is sometimes hopefully rendered Whorriskey, but mostly this is not even tried and the simple 'Waters' is substituted. Those going to England for work are particularly inclined to pick an 'English' name, *i.e.* one the foreman will recognize.

551 The third set of names, used for reference, consists of two or more Christian names, either Gaelic or English or both, 'strung' together in the manner described by Synge for Aran. Some people have as many as five or six names and 'epithets' strung together in this fashion. These names are the names of lineal ancestors either on the mother's or the father's side of the family. A person will take as many names as is necessary to distinguish him from all other persons, the surname system being inadequate for this task. (Four surnames cover 80 per cent. of the population.) He does not, however, pick these names arbitrarily but inherits the whole string. He can stop at any point in the string. Thus if a man was called 'Jimmy-Dhonnchadha-Mhuire-Mhicí,' his father must have been 'Donnchadh-Mhuire-Mhicí,' his paternal grandmother 'Máire-Mhicí' or maybe 'Máire-Mhicí-Tom.' Thus if our man wanted to add to his names, he would have to add 'Tom.' Usually one or at most two names are enough to distinguish a person, in

16: Messenger

ER6 Rural Irish ER6

• 167
582

[For information pertaining to the marriage patterns abroad of emigrants from Inis Beag, see 16: Messenger, ER6 Rural Irish, pp. 130-131.]

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

is a three-story tower house with its south and west walls partially destroyed. The middle story of the castle rests on vaults, and there are carved corbels projecting from the north and east walls. It is believed that the castle was assaulted in 1652 from the land side by Cromwellian troops, who disembarked at the back of the island and hauled their heavy cannons across the limestone pavement, unimpeded by the stone fences which stand today, to the monastery above the tower.

Queen Elizabeth annexed Inis Beag for the Crown in 1586 because of its strategic position, after two contending Irish families had appealed to her following their fierce battle for its possession, in which all of the folk may have been slaughtered. From 1586 until the first decade of the eighteenth century, Commonwealth, Loyalist, and Williamite forces were stationed in Inis Beag most of the time, and until 1886, when obtained by the Irish Land Commission, the island was owned by a succession of absentee Anglo-Irish landlords. When Cromwellian troops forced the surrender of Loyalists in 1652, the population of Inis Beag once again may have been decimated, although one legend holds that only males were put to the sword. The island after 1655 became a port for transshipment of clerics who were exiled to the West Indies. This was the time when Cromwell revenged himself on Irish Catholics and their Protestant allies by appropriating for his followers more than half of the Irish soil and leveling harsh political, commercial, and religious penalties. Thousands of priests were banished, including all of the bishops for a time, in his crusade.

It was after the Restoration in 1660 that the land of Inis Beag was divided into quarters, half-quarters, and smaller units and assigned to families. My genealogical research reveals that all of the families of Inis Beag trace descent from immigrants who arrived in the island during and after the last half of the seventeenth century. The early arrivals, as well as any survivors, may have intermarried and interbred with soldiers posted in the island, for anthropometric and blood group analyses (buttressed by surname and historical evidence and local legend) show that the folk more closely resemble the northern English than they do their mainland cousins. A Dublin humor magazine featured a cartoon, not favored in nativistic quarters, showing Inis Beag men in traditional attire playing cricket.

The islanders still express considerable bitterness over the conditions of poverty and servitude experienced by their ancestors during the 300 years that they lived under alien landlords. All of the excesses of foreign domination suffered by mainland peasants were suffered by Inis Beag folk, but were aggravated by the ordinary hardships of island living. Little is known of local events in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, until the island was "rediscovered" by Petrie and O'Flaherty. There was trading between Inis Beag and communities along the mainland coast for many miles, and ships passing by often dropped anchor at the island; but at that time this region of Ireland was very much isolated and seldom visited. A military garrison once again was established in Inis Beag for a brief period during the Napoleonic Wars, when the English feared an invasion of the British Isles from the west by French forces. A watch tower was constructed on the island, one of a chain along the Atlantic coast of Ireland, to give early warning of invasion.

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

The castle and watch tower still dominate the Inis Beag skyline, and the latter serves as a landmark for fishermen posting their nets. Another landmark, at the southeast tip of the island, is a 110-feet-high lighthouse built during the 1850s.

Written sources and local traditions disagree as to the effects of the great famine on Inis Beag. Some observers claim that the potato blight completely destroyed island crops, and the folk were forced to depend on secondary agricultural commodities, livestock, fish, and limpets in order to survive; conversely, others maintain that the blight did not penetrate the island until much later. According to my Inis Beag respondents, the blight did contaminate some gardens, but enough were spared so that the islanders were not greatly inconvenienced. In fact, potatoes were exported by some farmers to help feed starving mainlanders. Between 1841 and 1851, the population of Inis Beag increased by 62 persons, at a time when most other Irish communities had dwindling populations. The first record of substantial emigration from the island, mostly to the United States, was in 1822.

Contemporary Setting

Inis Beag has a northeast to southwest topographical axis, at right angles to its geological axis, and is a mile and three-quarters in length and a quarter of a mile less in width. A population of 350 persons inhabits four villages, and the island comprises 1440 acres. When giving directions informally, the folk refer to the beach side as the north side and the back of the island bordering the Atlantic as the south side; then, the sound separating Inis Beag from Inis Thiar becomes the west side, and the sound between Inis Beag and the mainland the east side. I will follow this practice when describing various geographical and other features in this chapter. Between the mainland and Inis Beag, a reef extending from the island far out into the east sound is a menace to shipping; it was on this reef within 200 yards of the shore that the freighter ran aground in 1960.

A large beach and a contiguous stretch of common land, which together make up over 200 of the island's 1440 acres, dominate the north side of Inis Beag. The beach is known as the "strand," following English usage, and lies west and north of the common land, about midway between the sounds (see Figs. 4, 9, and 10). It is thought that several hundred years ago arable land existed where the common land does today, and the strand was very narrow; but gradually sand accumulated, widening the beach and burying more and more farm land as it crept eastward. If one examines the Ordnance Survey Maps of 1841 and 1902, the slow encroachment of the sand can be noted. The common land was about half its present size in 1841, and 60 years later almost 70 acres of cultivable soil had been engulfed. The tops of fences projecting above the surface at the present time attest to the shifting of the sand, as does the buried church of the patron saint, and sand now threatens fertile plots on the east side of the island.

There are six major and several minor terraces in Inis Beag, of which the lower two underlie the strand, the common land, and two of the four villages. The lower terraces are broad and the upper ones narrow and precipitous, while weather-

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

2

The Land and the Sea

Standard of Living

THE STANDARD OF LIVING of the folk has improved vastly since the establishment of the Irish Land Commission in 1881 and the Congested Districts Board ten years later, and the islanders are better off today than the inhabitants of some other areas of the Gaeltacht. In 1891, the Congested Districts were delineated as regions in which the population did not possess sufficient land to maintain life except at an extremely low standard. Between that year and 1951, the population in the districts declined 42 percent—from 541,000 to 367,000 persons. The few areas which would rank as congested now, on the 1891 basis, are mainly in Cos. Donegal, Mayo, and Galway (Freeman 1960:121–123). A vigorous and continuing effort to stem the tide of emigration, in part caused by poverty, led the commission, the board, subsequently the Gaeltacht Eireann which replaced the board after 1925, and other government agencies appointed in this century, to improve the standard of living by various actions: the enlargement of land holdings for more effective farming, the encouragement of small factory and domestic industries, the improvement of fishing, the construction of public works, and the introduction of various subsidies. Seasonal laboring in England, often practiced out of necessity by mainland farmers but not by the islanders, and remittances from relatives who have emigrated are income sources which also have served to alleviate poverty; but the major palliative throughout Ireland has been emigration. One of the factors limiting migration from Inis Beag to the mainland until recent decades was the low standard of living which prevailed in the country at large. An islander could not escape local hardships and privations by emigrating to urban centers as he can today; he had to turn his back on Ireland.

Most Inis Beag people believe themselves to be materially poor, although they resent others agreeing publicly with this view. A well-known Dublin newspaper feature writer in 1963 was denounced, and a vow made not to permit him to

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
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size from fourths to quarter-acres, located along the quarter that his community fronts. As a result of past inheritance and purchase, however, five Castle villagers own plots in one or two other quarters, as do five High and two Low villagers. Before field building commenced, the most extensive and fertile soils were found on the terraces; shallow and less widespread soils were situated just south of the terrace crest, while the back of the island was, and still is, mostly limestone pavement. Landholders originally were assigned equal acreage in each of these three areas, so that no one would have an advantage over his neighbors, and this pattern still predominates. The quarters are separated from one another by high, thick stone fences which run almost the length of Inis Beag, and, from west to east, they are known as Quarter of the *Phoillín* (derivation unknown), Quarter of the Ridge of Huts (after an ancient *clochán* settlement behind High Village), Quarter of the Castle, and Quarter of the Lake; they embrace, respectively, 271, 261, 240, and 263 acres.

Fifty-nine of the 71 householders in Inis Beag hold or own land, and one of these is an absentee holder. If an individual possesses four or fewer acres, he is regarded as landless—"a man of few gardens"—and 11 men are so designated. Two as yet unresolved disputes over the possession of land when resolved will add two other householders to the landless category, unless the property is divided in some manner among all four litigants by the Irish Land Commission. The folk prefer to rent rather than to own land, so that the commission will supervise matters relating to inheritance "fairly" and with little cost to the litigants should a dispute arise. The average sized Inis Beag holding is 15.7 acres, or approximately a croggery, and 25 islanders hold this amount of land; in addition, one person has 40 acres, three 32 acres, one 28 acres, eight 24 acres, eight 20 acres, four 12 acres, and nine 8 acres. Below is a chart summing up ownership data by village:

	Landholders and Owners	*Landless Householders*	*Average Sized Holding (in acres)*
Low Village	17	9	11.0
High Village	14	1	18.2
Castle Village	13	2	19.0
Terrace Village	13	1	16.4

The disproportionate number of landless persons in Low are, for the most part, either descendants of fisherfolk who centered in that community in earlier times and did not possess land, or siblings of landholders who chose not to emigrate. They support themselves by craft work, keeping tourists, fishing, managing shops, and working for the government, among other pursuits.

Farming

There is neither legendary nor historical evidence of when soil building commenced in Inis Beag, but the process is an archaic one and is practiced in other communities along the Atlantic seaboard where appropriate seaweeds are available. Today, between 45 and 50 percent of the land surface of the island is

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
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628
829 passersby, and live more frugally and save more as a result. Gruff, impatient, and
often impolite, they talk rapidly in high pitched voices and shout at their beasts
[273] and at one another from a distance, and on occasion they will use profanity. Inis
Thiar men drink more than Inis Beag men, it is claimed; rather than sipping
slowly and savoring their stout and whiskey, they consume it quickly and are more
concerned with the effects that it produces. It is admitted in Inis Beag that all
Irish are inquisitive and disposed to gossip about their fellows, but islanders to
the west are openly so and will "demand" information from tourists and will
[593] discuss one another quite freely. Braver, "bolder," and less concerned with morality,
men from Inis Thiar rowed to the freighter on several occasions and contested
successfully with local folk for salvage, which caused some Inis Beag wives to
[562] deride their husbands for not possessing these qualities. Women of Inis Thiar also
are thought to be braver and bolder, and remain less in their homes, visit relatives
and acquaintances and the shops more often, and in general participate more in
social events than do their sisters to the east. Despite being extremely critical of
Inis Thiar folk for possessing the above and many other less prominent traits, the
people of Inis Beag grudgingly admit that their neighbors possess greater *esprit*
[167] *de corps* and enjoy life more than themselves. Once a person emigrates from Inis
Beag, he or she seldom returns; but Inis Thiar emigrants are "clever" and do well
abroad, and often return with earnings to remain at home, especially women who
come back with "fortunes" to seek husbands.

829 The attitudes of islanders toward those living on the mainland—"towns-
186 people" or "city folk"—reveal a primitivistic bias which probably can be traced
[121] back to the Viking occupation, when towns first were established in Ireland and
primitive Celts became transformed into peasants: "that primitive people retain
a morality which civilized people tend to lose; that a man's moral worth declines
in rough proportion to his distance from the soil; that civilization must be held
accountable for man's noteworthy catalogue of vices;" (Ardrey 1961:147–148).
Inis Beag folk regard themselves as impeccably moral and mainlanders, although
fellow Catholics, as immoral; yet the "progressiveness" of the latter is envied
secretly and gives rise to the sensitivity of islanders to the real and imagined
denigration of them by mainlanders for their backwardness. Mainland Irish are
[291] thought to be overly pecuniary, dishonest, rude, and promiscuous. When visiting
towns and cities on the mainland, Inis Beag people for many years have worn main-
land attire so as not to be singled out and ridiculed. They are ashamed of their
English speech—even though adults speak the tongue with greater proficiency
than many urban dwellers—and believe that they are prey to dishonest shopkeepers,
[123] who are ever ready to take advantage of their ignorance and naiveté. Whenever
my wife and I paid short visits to a nearby port or to Dublin, we were requested by
islanders to make purchases, have repairs made under our name, and transact other
business for them because we were "too clever to be cheated." Once in the city, the
folk miss Inis Beag with its clear air and broad expanses, and they complain of
the tall buildings (seldom more than four stories high) which "press in" on them,
the bustle of the main street, the curious stares of townspeople, and the dirtiness
of buildings and roads. In claiming that few islanders would prefer to live there

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

declining steadily, and between 1951 and 1960 there were only nine marriages between folk who remained in the island—and since then but five. 582

The prevalence of celibacy and late marriage is a matter of grave concern to the people. My analysis of these phenomena reveals over 20 contributing factors, of which I will consider only the most important—and these briefly, since most of them will be addressed further within the contexts of the family, personality, and emigration. The one most often voiced by the islanders is the emigration of girls in increasing numbers at younger ages; of the nine girls eligible for marriage, only one is older than 25 years, and several are contemplating emigration. The folk are much less prone to talk of the single estate and late marriage than they are of emigration, which share many of the same causes, and they appear to know fewer of the causes of the former and are less willing to assign relative weights when assessing them. The cause of all three conditions most often cited by both writers and social scientists is the system of inheritance, whereby land cannot be subdivided but is passed on to one son who must wait to marry until his father dies or is willing (or forced) to pass on the land, and his siblings have married or emigrated. By this time, the son is usually middle-aged and cautious in making his choice of a spouse. Most fathers in Inis Beag are loath to surrender their property, and with it control of the family, to sons wishing to marry, and some even will postpone receiving the old age in order to maintain their status position past the age of 70 years. A father who does not choose a successor among several sons until late in his life—which is a common occurrence—can retard their marriages if they choose to "wait it out." Equally loath to disturb the family *status quo* is the mother, who fears not only the loss of her commanding position in the household, but the loss of her son's affection to an incoming daughter-in-law. The man who wishes to marry and is prevented from doing so by domineering and jealous parents is the subject of gossip, and his plight is regarded as a "shame."

582 589 829 [167] 582 589 428 593 [888]

Since late marriage has been a persistent phenomenon in Ireland since the great famine, it has become institutionalized and serves as an expectation for young people. That the folk are aware of this cause is attested by their frequent advice to offspring that they postpone marriage to conform to island tradition. This advice invariably is buttressed by a rationale of males not having enough "sense" to marry until they approach the age of 40 years. Reflected in the rationale is the system of male age grading conceptualized in Inis Beag: a man is a "boy" or "lad" until 40 years of age, an adult until 60 years, middle-aged until 80, and old-aged after that (exhilarating to the American anthropologist who comes from a society obsessed with the "cult of youth"). Another rationale for late marriage often heard in Inis Beag is the impossibility of divorce in Catholic Ireland, which demands that the choice of a spouse be well considered. It appears that this argument is usually used to explain late marriage when other factors are in fact responsible—certainly when "considering" covers two or more decades.

582 175 829 [561] [586]

Two closely linked causes of celibacy and late marriage seldom broached in Inis Beag are male solidarity and the unwillingness of many men to accept the responsibilities of marriage, particularly its sexual responsibilities. Marriage is looked on with trepidation, or at least as something less than desirable. The marriageable man in his late twenties and thirties is usually sexually repressed to an unbelieve-

582 589 581 562 [593] [164]

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
(1959-1960) Inis Beag

Implicit in these statistics are such Irish phenomena as monogamy, the predominance of the nuclear family (Only 10.3 percent are extended in Inis Beag.), family exogamy, patrilocal residence, and a high incidence of celibacy. The last listed bachelor who lives with his widowed sister-in-law, and frequently is visited by a brother's adolescent grandson from the mainland, is regarded by many bachelors as fortunate—"He has a woman and a boy to work and no 'responsibilities.'"

Inheritance in the island is patrilineal, and before a man can marry, his father or widowed mother must "pass on" the property to him. To encourage aged men to surrender ownership of their land, a statute forbids their receiving the old age at 70 years until they have so acted. But despite this law, six Inis Beag elders aged 70 to 79 years—with a total of seven bachelor sons ranging in age from 32 to 47 years (not counting eight others who have emigrated but are eligible to inherit) —still maintain ownership themselves. When a man is without sons, he most commonly wills the land to a brother's son or arranges to have a man wed his daughter and "marry in" to the household. An in-marrying son-in-law, it is interesting to note, may pay a bride wealth, which usually is much larger than the dowry of the girl, for he has no land of his own. Among contemporary landholders, five have obtained property from uncles, six from widowed mothers, and two by marrying in. Other land in Inis Beag has been procured through purchase, exchange, gift-giving, and land dispute verdicts.

A major cause of celibacy, late marriage, disputes, and emigration related to the system of inheritance, seldom mentioned either in writings about Inis Beag or by the islanders, is the common practice of a father playing off his sons against one another for the patrimony in order to achieve favored treatment for his wife and himself in their waning years. Elders are well treated, in part as a result of the above and in part out of the fear that after death their ghosts will punish those who have maltreated them. Often the playing off of sons for the patrimony leads to factionalism within the family and may provoke a secretly favored son to emigrate or, more seriously, all sons acting in concert to depart in anger and disgust. Today, a total of 22 married men, widowers, and widows whose average age is 65.7, hold land that is inheritable by a total of 56 sons whose average age is 30.1 years. (The 16 elders who have a total of 20 sons in the island average 66.7 years of age and their offspring 33.6.) The uncertainty about which sibling will inherit is reflected in these figures: of the 59 present landholders, 47 percent are first born, 42 percent second, 8 percent third, and 3 percent fourth and beyond.

Although the Inis Beag family is totally exogamous, the village is only 78.3 percent exogamous (The range for the four villages is from 75 to 83 percent.). Since 1911, six women have married men, mostly farmers, living in communities along the neighboring coast and only one an Inis Thiar islander, while four mainland and five Inis Thiar women have wed men from Inis Beag. During this same 50 year period, six local men have married into contiguous mainland settlements and one into Inis Thiar, but no men from the outside have married into the island. As we have noted already, immigrants for two or three generations are regarded as strangers by the folk, and the same is true of in-marrying wives; these women are treated aloofly and are the victims of much spiteful gossip. Many female siblings marry locally rather than emigrate—one case of four sisters, five of

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782 year during the early morning. The folk visit the church and graveyard throughout the day and are awarded indulgences for their prayers in behalf of souls of the dead residing in Purgatory. In the cemetery, prayers are offered for relatives, one at a time, and then for everyone buried there, those lost at sea, and those who have no one to pray for them. An islander going to the chapel makes a succession of visits inside to pray, retiring to the churchyard after each prayer; an indulgence is granted for every visit, and some children carry small stones and pile them outside of the chapel to keep count of the indulgences thus acquired. It is said of those who remain longest in the cemetery and make the most number of visits to the chapel that they are attempting to mollify the ghosts of relatives whom they treated badly when alive.

796 The 12 days of Christmas commence with the feast of the Nativity on December 25th and end with the feast of the Epiphany on January 6th, and include the feasts of St. Stephen on December 26th, Holy Innocents on December 28th, and Circumcision on January 1st. This is the high point of the year for the folk, even though it is a much quieter period today than it was half a century ago, when social concerns outweighed religious ones. Work is suspended altogether on Christmas and the three days following it and on January 1st and 6th, and during
[167] the rest of the period only "light chores" are done. Importance is attached to the
[582] 12 days over and above their religious significance and the fact that little work is
[574] done; for at this time emigrants return to Inis Beag on holiday; if a marriage is to occur during the year it is likely to be arranged then; at least one party usually is given which attracts most of the adults; and the men gather in the pubs on
[521] several nights to sing, dance, and tell stories. For weeks before Christmas, rumors abound as to which relatives will visit the island, who will marry whom, and where the party will take place; these serve to sharpen the anticipation of the islanders and to make them less mindful of the worsening of the weather.

[292] In preparation for the Christmas season, new clothes are fashioned—as at Easter—to be worn initially on the five feast days, and it is usual for a man needing
[351] a new *crios* to have it woven in time for Christmas mass. Houses and streets are
[356] cleaned and repaired, fireplaces whitewashed, and supplies are taken in for
[262] the 12 days as steamer service is curtailed. On Christmas Eve, a special dish of
[364] corned ling or cod smothered in sauce is served at "Christmas supper," and large white candles purchased in the shops are placed on the dining table and in one or more windows of the cottage, to be burned nightly during the 12 days. The sight from the sea of the darkened island with its hundreds of candles rivals in beauty the view of the mainland coast far away on St. John's Eve, when bonfires are
[574] lighted as far as the eye can see. Relatives visit one another after Christmas supper,
[431] and when the children have been put to bed, stockings are hung above the fireplace and filled by the parents with oranges, candies, ribbons, pencils, handkerchiefs,
[861] and toys for the infants. Santa Claus is the gift giver, so infants are taught, and thus he can be used to promote good behavior on their part in the weeks prior to Christmas; this belief seldom persists into childhood, however, as older children
[431] are eager to disabuse their younger siblings of it. Adults usually do not exchange gifts, but they receive them from kin and acquaintances abroad to whom they in
[262] turn send Christmas cards. On Christmas Day, special cakes and breads are served

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5

The Future of the Island

Emigration

MANY ELDERS IN INIS BEAG fear that the island and its neighbors will go the way of the Blasket Islands of Co. Kerry, whose remaining inhabitants were removed by the government because their support had become an economic liability. With only slight fluctuations, the population of Inis Beag has been diminishing since it reached its zenith of 532 persons in 1861. Below are population figures since 1821—when the first census was compiled—until the present time:

1821	421
1841	456
1861	532
1881	497
1901	483
1926	409
1936	445
1946	447
1956	376
1960	350

The upsurge in population after 1926 reflects the depression in the United States and the Second World War, when emigrants returned home to escape unemployment and conscription, while the downsurge after 1946 reflects the shift of emigration from America to England. Frequently discussed by elders is the steady increase in emigration during the past 15 years, the decreasing age of emigrants, and the presence within the past decade—for the first time in three centuries—of aged parents all of whose children have emigrated, and of land which is idle or rented out by emigrants who probably never will return to Inis Beag. Jokes concerning the building of a hotel by the Germans or a missile site by the Americans in the island to stimulate the economy, as well as serious suggestions that the

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168 829 [522] government increase its services and subsidies even more, reveal the underlying tension within those who are most strongly committed to the local tradition and wish its perpetuation.

• 169 168 829 12 The index of my field notes contains more references to emigration than to any other category, for seldom in an interview, whether guided or open-ended, did the topic fail to come up, no matter what was the initial subject under consideration. Of the more than 30 causes of the phenomenon yielded by my analysis, all are known to the folk, and they are ever eager to express opinions as to the relative weights which should be attached to those that they deem significant. My wife and I usually were solicited for our opinions as well whenever the topic was addressed. I will deal below with only the major causes of emigration from Inis Beag, and will consider first those which are internal—the "push" factors—and then those which are external—the "pull" factors. The islanders emphasize external causes in their own deliberations, but those who are not apologists for the *status quo*, or who are genuinely bewildered by the exodus of young people in recent years, are able to identify the internal ones also, but are less willing to assign them sufficient weight. Emigration is the topic about which my wife and I could be most objective and outspoken concerning the role of the church and obtain the most agreement and arouse the least resentment among our respondents.

167 428 589 592 [121] Paramount among the push factors are the previously considered system of inheritance and the causes underlying the prevalence of celibacy, late marriage, and personality depression. The fact that only one son in a family can inherit land, which forces his brothers to emigrate, is the internal factor most stressed in the literature pertaining to Inis Beag, but least stressed by the folk. The reason for this is that until recently it was rather common for siblings without land to remain on the island, thanks to the benevolence of their brothers and the government and their ability to support themselves by craft work, keeping tourists, fishing, managing [162] shops, and obtaining remittances. Of the 71 households in Inis Beag, 28 are headed by male siblings: 20 in which 10 pairs of brothers and their families live, 3 in which 3 pairs of bachelor siblings reside, 3 in which 3 brothers and their families live, and 2 in which 3 siblings reside—two as bachelors in one and [182] the third with his family in the other. It is apparent that other factors, of equal or greater importance, are stimulating emigration.

167 168 581 [829] [162] The push factor given the most weight by the islanders is the unwillingness of men to marry—"The lads are too fussy, and the girls get tired of waiting and go off." But the fact that male "fussiness" is based on such conditions as parents opposing the marriage of their sons for various reasons and bachelors being loath to assume the responsibilities of marriage, especially its sexual responsibilities, seldom is probed. Sometimes it is the girls who are accused of "putting off" potential spouses by being too discriminating, but this accusation becomes untenable when one observes that there is but a single unmarried woman between the ages of 26 and 44 years in Inis Beag (as compared to 18 men), and that the average age at which women emigrate has dropped from 24.5 years during the 1941–1950 decade to 21.1 during the last decade (as compared to 24.9 to 23.8 for men). Some girls admit that they are emigrating because the possibility of their being asked to marry is remote, but far more of them are dissatisfied with the lot of married

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women in the island and are attracted by what they consider to be a more rewarding life on the mainland and abroad, and so emigrate for these reasons. One of the most "pitied" girls in the island is a returned emigrant to the United States, who, despite being 24 years of age and suitable for marriage in every way, is not being courted, although it is known that she came back to Inis Beag to obtain a husband.

All of the conditions making for personality depression—the intrusion of priests into secular affairs, hypochondria, malicious gossiping, poverty, boredom, and isolation—also instigate emigration. My analysis assigns the secular excesses of the clergy and their implementation of the Jansenist doctrines of the Catholic Church in Ireland as the primary push factors in emigration and supports the contention made by Paul Blanshard that, "When all the reasons for a flight from Ireland have been mentioned, there still remains a suspicion that Irish young people are leaving their nation largely because it is a poor place in which to be happy and free. Have the priests created a civilization in which the chief values of youth and love are subordinate to Catholic discipline?" (Blanshard 1954:154). What "remains a suspicion" to Blanshard as regards all of Ireland is very much a reality in Inis Beag.

Other internal factors accounting for emigration which are considered important by the folk are the deadening of initiative by government services and subsidies and the institutionalization of emigration itself. While many islanders believe that the government ought to support even further the local economy in order to combat emigration, others feel that its present level of benevolence has had a deleterious effect on their character. Young people observing the indolence of their elders, according to this opinion, are shamed into seeking a more active life away from Inis Beag. In my estimation, this is a superficial cause, but the institutionalization of emigration is a vital factor, more recognized by youth than by their parents. Just as in the case of late marriage, emigration since famine times gradually has become an expectation—a "way of life"—and it will stimulate some folk to leave even though, in the estimation of their fellows, it might be advantageous for them to remain. When a young man says that he has an "itch to go to England and work for a spell," he usually is being motivated in this manner.

Among the external causes of emigration, the most significant are the growth of prosperity on the mainland and abroad, the influence of ever increasing numbers of tourists who visit and returned emigrants who come for short stays or to retire in Inis Beag, the impact of the mass media of communication, and the increasing availability of scholarship funds for children to attend secondary schools on the mainland. The United States has been a land of freedom, opportunity, and prosperity to the Irish since the early seventeenth century, but particularly during and after the famine (Approximately 1,000,000 Irish emigrated between 1846 and 1851, and another 1,500,000 perished from hunger, according to Woodham-Smith 1962:411.). The first record of substantial emigration from Inis Beag is in 1822, and from that time until the Second World War most islanders migrated to the United States, never to return. However, with the growth of prosperity in England after 1946, the stream of emigration shifted in that direction. Not only did jobs become plentiful across the Irish Sea then, but large, viable ethnic communities served by Irish clergy had sprung up in the larger cities. It became possi-

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
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167 178 ble to visit Inis Beag frequently, as the cost and distance are slight compared to a journey across the Atlantic.

The many vacationing emigrants who now return to the island at Christmas or Easter or during the summer months often succeed in persuading relatives and acquaintances to return to England with them. Those so persuaded declare that they will return soon with their "fortunes" to settle permanently, but they seldom do once "emancipated." Since the Second World War, several Americans have returned home, and their stories of life in the United States make the youth restive. Tourists who remain for weeks and months in Inis Beag and come to know many islanders also sow the seeds of discontent. A favorite subject of talk in the pubs is the relative advantages to be gained from migrating to particular cities in England and America, and anthropologists as well as returned emigrants are called on as consultants in this matter by youths.

167 204 207 Almost every cottage in Inis Beag has a radio, or "wireless," and although the folk seldom read books, a wide assortment of domestic and foreign magazines and newspapers find their way into most homes. These mass media also are an emancipating force making for restiveness and discontent, because they allow islanders a glimpse behind the "lace curtain" at what appears to be a happier and freer world. Television was introduced into Inis Beag in 1963 at the lighthouse, and a second set was procured for the new "dance hall" when it was completed two years later. Few islanders venture to the lighthouse to view television, but I am told by correspondents that many now visit the hall during the several evening hours when transmission from Telefis Eireann takes place. As a result, television has become an acculturative medium to be reckoned with. Both radio and television programs are censored in Ireland, but even so the morality expressed in them—especially in the sex and violence drenched American ones—presents a striking contrast to locally conceived moral precepts. A hypothetical censor from Inis Beag most certainly would create more discontinuities with his shears in television performances than would his much maligned "secularized" colleagues in Dublin. My wife and I found that viewing television with islanders at the lighthouse on two occasions was a traumatic experience; it gave us a different (and even more disquieting) perspective on programs in the United States and their enculturative effects than can be obtained at home.

177 207

167 873 Since the Second World War, 28 island youths have pursued secondary education elsewhere in Ireland, either in high schools, called "colleges," or in technical schools, and most have been supported by government scholarships. The usual high school scholarship is for 5 years, and a student must be 14 years of age and qualify by competitive examination to receive one. Only 4 of these 28 students —of which 2 are teachers in the national school—have returned to Inis Beag. One young man watched 2 girls, either of whom he eventually might have married, go off to the mainland for school and said, "Scholarships are killing the island;" what he was referring to, other than his own disappointment, is the fact that 19 of the 28 students who left for advanced education are girls. The reason for the disproportionate number of girls receiving scholarships is that they are far more motivated academically and have better scholastic records than boys. There is, however, a widespread belief in the island that certain families are favored by priests and

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teachers, whose influence and attention earn for the children of these families the greater share of scholarship funds.

Not only has education abroad been a major pull factor in emigration, but local education as well in the form of a summer language school for mainland children, which was established in 1960 and has convened for two months each year ever since. Over a hundred students—in two shifts of a month apiece—attend the school, where in addition to learning Irish formally and speaking it in the homes where they are lodged, they are instructed in singing, playing musical instruments, and set dancing in the traditional mold. Monies from Gaeltacht Eireann support the director from the mainland and the Inis Beag headmaster who teach, a skilled musician who provides music for dancing and also instructs, and the students. Eight hundred pounds were channeled into the local economy in 1960 by this nativistic endeavor hopefully aimed at propagating Gaelic and halting emigration. The influence of the visiting children, who interact with their island counterparts at home and at outdoor dances each evening, is considerable; the outsiders tend to be critical of conditions in Inis Beag and boast of the superiority in every dimension of life on the mainland. It is questionable whether the school has diminished the push effect of emigration by enlivening the social atmosphere of the island as much as it has increased the pull effect by creating even more discontent among young people. There are those who denounce the language school on the grounds that the visiting children speak more English than Irish in the local homes; that many islanders in their greed for profit do not provide adequately for the students assigned to them; and that some of the mainlanders are openly promiscuous and thus subvert the morality of Inis Beag youths.

Since 1960, priests have become more realistic in their appraisal of the causes of emigration and have taken steps to enliven further the social milieu of the island. They have been responsible for introducing set dancing and tin whistle playing instruction in the national school, for organizing yearly athletic, canoe rowing, and dancing competitions between folk of Inis Beag and Inis Thiar, for building the dance hall to serve various purposes, and for setting up a small lending library of books in the school. The hall was built with a Gaeltacht Eireann grant, the free labor of island men, and money gifts solicited from interested parties all over the world. It resembles its predecessor—the boathouse on the strand built by the coast guard company—in that it functions as dance hall, trade school, storage house, and meeting place; but it is much larger and better constructed and has many more facilities than the latter. The folk view it as a mixed blessing, for they disliked building it without being paid wages, and feel now that it is not available to them enough of the time, and when it is, they are charged by the curate to attend dances and view television. Many believe that church and government should have provided wages to the builders to compensate for farming and other time lost, and that "the key of the hall shouldn't be in the priest's pocket." Since its completion, the building has accommodated most of the activities of the language school.

In contrast to the islanders who are deeply committed to the local culture and fear that Inis Beag will become depopulated within the next generation, there

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are those who are either indifferent to the rapid increase in emigration since 1946, or welcome it. The island has its bitter critics, even among a few of the oldest generation who regret not having emigrated when they had the opportunity. A noted craftsman, long disillusioned with island existence, is refusing to train any of his sons to carry on the family tradition of generations. English is spoken as much as Irish in the presence of children in some households so as to prepare them for eventual emigration, in spite of the protestations of some priests and neighbors who insist that the alien tongue not be spoken on moral and nativistic grounds. The language revival movement receives much criticism because it results in emigrants being placed at a disadvantage; a frequently heard utterance in Inis Beag, even among those who hesitate to use English before their offspring, is, "What good will Irish do a person?" It is customary now for emigrating youths with inadequate command of English to spend three months to a year in a mainland community—with relatives or at a job—before going on to England or America. On the mainland, they also overcome some of their shyness and feelings of inferiority and become acquainted with Western customs absent from Inis Beag.

Islanders Abroad

My wife and I obtained some emigration statistics for the siblings of all folk now living in Inis Beag. For 289 persons who emigrated between 1891 and 1958, we assembled accurate data on: community settled in abroad, occupation, marriage age, place of origin and religion of spouse, and number of offspring. Of these 289, 4.8 percent went to neighboring islands, mostly to marry; 28.0 percent to the mainland (permanently rather than to prepare for emigration from Ireland); 42.8 percent to the United States; 22.8 percent to England; 1.0 percent to Australia; and 0.6 percent to Canada and other countries. The shift of emigration from the United States to England after the Second World War is revealed by the following statistics: between 1891 and 1945, 72.4 percent of Inis Beag emigrants went to the United States and only 10.6 percent to England; but between 1946 and 1958, emigration to the United States dropped to 25.5 percent, while to England it increased to 45.1 percent. The fact that before 1946 approximately 16 percent of the islanders who emigrated remained in Ireland as compared to 28 percent after that date attests to the increasing properity in their homeland as well as abroad.

It is beyond the scope of this work to follow Inis Beag emigrants of the past and present to their destinations abroad and beyond; the causes, conditions, and consequences of emigration from Ireland to America and England are amply documented in such standard works as Cecil Woodham-Smith's *The Great Hunger*, George W. Potter's *To the Golden Door*, William V. Shannon's *The American Irish*, Arnold Schrier's *Ireland and the American Emigration*, and John A. Jackson's *The Irish in Britain*. But, in closing chapter and book, I would like to discuss two additional sets of statistics which have an important bearing on Inis Beag culture and personality and which, as far as I know, have never been compiled systematically for any body of emigrants from a particular locality of Ireland. One

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set deals with the place of origin and the religion of men and women whom islanders marry outside of Ireland, and the other concerns the frequency of marriage among those who have left the country.

Emigrants from Inis Beag have settled, for the most part, in Irish ethnic communities—near relatives—in large cities and their environs of the United States, England, Australia, and Canada. In the United States, these are greater Boston, Hartford, greater New York, Chicago, Milwaukee, and Oakland. The majority of them have had their transportation overseas paid for by relatives who emigrated before them and in whose communities they have made their new homes, and the first order of business for the newcomers is to repay the loans made to them for the journey. Of the first generation arrivals, 37.4 percent of them did not marry; of the remainder, 10.7 percent married fellow Inis Beag emigrants, 14.3 percent persons from Inis Thiar and other nearby islands, 40 percent Irish from the mainland, 8.9 percent Irish-Americans of the second generation and beyond, and 9.5 percent non-Irish. The unknown category is 16.6 percent and includes emigrants who no longer are in contact with their families in Inis Beag or who have married Protestants. As to the former, it is common for men to sever relations with their kinsmen at home when their mothers die, and even some daughters do so after they have been abroad a few years, especially those who have married non-Catholics or "foreigners." This reflects the Oedipus complex and religious and ethnic biases in the Inis Beag family, and runs counter to the assumption of nativists, primitivists, and functionalists who stress the strength of family ties in Ireland. The folk claim that no emigrant in human memory has married a Protestant, but I learned from islanders who had settled for many years in American communities of at least six who had done so.

Not only are the folk secretive about those of their number who have married Protestants after emigrating, but also about emigrants who have "lost the faith." By and large, these are young people who have emigrated to England since 1946; it seems that youthful emigrants before that time remained loyal Catholics, as have those who have gone to the United States recently. The widespread disaffection of Irish Catholics in Britain frequently is discussed in Inis Beag, and is blamed on the anonymity and "temptations" provided by the city. The "priest and gossip keep us faithful here" were the words of a man concerned about the rumored disaffection of his son in London.

During my last visit to Inis Beag in 1965, I discussed with over a dozen islanders some of the statistics that I had compiled previously and have reported herein. Without telling them the results of my analysis, I asked them whether more folk remained single in Inis Beag or abroad, and without exception they made the first choice. Their collective opinion is summed up by the remark of one that, "Here the old people interfere. They don't want to give up the land, and they don't want a new girl to come in. In America, the kids make up their own minds." Social scientists long have assumed that when emigrants from Ireland settle elsewhere, they soon come to marry as early and frequently as the people among whom they live, mostly because of changing economic conditions. But a single rate of 37.4 percent abroad, as compared to 28.6 percent in Inis Beag, belies both common and scientific sense. Certainly factors more important than economic ones

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[For information pertaining to emigration and its relation to sexual repression, late marriage, celibacy, and family relations in Ireland, see 17: Messenger, ER6 Rural Irish, category 116, pp. 32-36.]

17: Messenger E-4,5 (1958-1966)1971 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
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govern our "morality, custom, and manners" (e.g., persuasion, ridicule, and gossip). I will not consider political and economic manipulation; more significant are other techniques that I have labelled secular social control. Inis Beag, as much as any human community, is characterized by gossip, ridicule, and opprobrium. Influenced by nativism, primitivism, and structural-functional theory, writers and social scientists have painted a distorted picture of culture and personality equilibrium among Irish peasants. Actually, the folk are neither glorified Celts nor "noble savages," and dysfunctional sociocultural forms, mental aberrations (neuroses, psychoses, and psychosomatic disorders), and exaggerated defense postures abound.

Inis Beag people are ambivalent about gossip; they welcome every opportunity to engage in it, yet detest the practice when they are its victims. When asked to cite the major deficiencies of their way of life, islanders usually place the prevalence of malicious gossiping near the top of their list. Boys and men hide themselves in the darkness or behind fences to overhear the conversations of passersby; they maintain close scrutiny of visitors during the summer, both day and night, in order to discover them in "compromising" situations. Parties are organized at the last moment and persons will leave the island without any previous announcement—often to emigrate or enter the hospital or join a religious order—in order to circumvent gossip. Rumors run rife in Inis Beag, especially when they concern, for example, the "nude" sun bathing of a visiting actress (bared shoulders and lower thighs) or the "attack" on a Dublin girl late at night by an island youth (an effort to hold her hand while under the influence of stout). Over a dozen efforts on our part to determine the truth behind the most pernicious rumors of this genre revealed sexual fantasy at their core in every case.

The force most responsible for limiting the potential social activities of women—which would make their lot much easier and possibly stem the tide of emigration—is the fear of gossip: "If I went for a walk, they'd wonder why I wasn't home tending my chores." Even couples who might otherwise disregard religious teachings and the wrath of the priest do not court, because it might be observed and reported through gossip to the entire population.[7] An islander must carefully regulate his

[7] The fear of being observed, as well as repression, may account for the apparent lack of sexual contact with animals. This practice may be common among mainland peasants, if one is willing to accept as evidence the existence of a genre of dirty jokes popular there, and hearsay among certain scholars concerning confessional materials.

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HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL IMPLICATIONS

I have already touched tangentially on some of the historical and broad cultural implications of sexual puritanism, in Ireland as well as Inis Beag. In this final section, I will examine the perennially addressed phenomena of late marriage, celibacy, and emigration, in their island setting, with special reference to the factor of sexual repression.

In a population of 350, 116 persons are married, 13 are widows, 3 are widowers, and 33 males over twenty-three years of age and 21 females over seventeen are single. Since marriage occurs between twenty-four and forty-five for men and eighteen and thirty-two for women, on the basis of past statistics, only 18 men and 9 women are eligible for marriage. As mentioned earlier, the average marriage age for males is thirty-six and for females twenty-five. My wife and I isolated almost two dozen interrelated causes of late marriage and the prevalence of bachelor and spinsterhood. The most emphasized cause in Ireland is the pattern of inheritance: one son, usually the eldest, must wait until the father is ready to pass on his patrimony and his own siblings have married or emigrated. In an attempt to alleviate the situation somewhat, a law today requires that to receive the "old-age" (pension) a man at seventy must will his property to a son, or other appropriate person. This cause is important in Inis Beag, although primogeniture is not so well defined (of those sons inheriting property, 47 percent are first born, 42 percent second, 8 percent third, and 3 percent fourth and later). Inis Beag fathers are loath to surrender their land and control of the household to their sons and will often play off the sons, one against another, in order to achieve favored treatment for their wives and themselves in their waning years. Occasionally this procedure "backfires": the sons, acting in concert, emigrate together, and an increasing amount of land lies idle because of this.

Equally loath to disturb the family status quo, island mothers will often resist incoming daughters-in-law, who threaten not only their commanding position but the loss of their sons' affection. Mothers whom we have interviewed in Inis Beag and elsewhere in Ireland display the extreme of Oedipal attachment when they rejoice in their sons' decision

589 to join the priesthood; not only are spiritual blessings and prestige brought
593 to the family as a result, but their sons are at last removed from potential
[155] wives. Yet the Inis Beag man who wants to marry and is prevented from
793] doing so by domineering and jealous parents is the subject of much gossip. Outwardly, at least, his plight is considered a "shame."

* 831 To the man in his late twenties and thirties who is secure in his
581 home and has established regularized patterns of conduct (and has a
589 mother who acts in most ways as a wife surrogate), the general responsi-
567 bilities of marriage, and specifically its sexual responsibility, are factors
[593] militating against his seeking a spouse. Some men who have land, the consent of their parents, and willing "sweethearts" will balk at a match because they are too happy "running with the lads," and if persuaded to marry, they will try to retain as much of their bachelor role as possible within marriage. It was hinted to my wife and me on several occasions that particular island celibates almost married several times in succession, only to find the sexual commitment too difficult to make at the last moment.

162 Three other causes of late marriage and the single estate in Inis Beag
• 167 must be mentioned. Girls are more dissatisfied with their future lot than
582 are boys and men and are emigrating at ever younger ages, thus sharply
589 reducing the number of eligible females. During the 1950–1959 period, the average age at which girls emigrate dropped below twenty-one years.
[871] Each year more of them attend schools on the mainland and thus are
484 more exposed to stimuli which promote emigration. Mothers are puzzled
178] at the increasing exodus of their daughters, since women today have a far easier time than they did a generation or two ago; but some are glad
182 to see them escape the drudgery and boredom of island existence. Since
582 late marriage has been a persistent phenomenon in Ireland since the great famine, it has become institutionalized and serves as an expectation for young people. We heard Inis Beag adults assert that marriage should be postponed to conform to island mores; this usually was buttressed by
829 a rationale of males not having "enough sense" to marry until they are
561] nearly forty years of age. Reflected in this rationale is the male age-grading conceptualized by the folk: a man is a "boy" or "lad" until forty, an adult until sixty, middle-aged until eighty, and aged after that (exhilarating to the American anthropologist approaching forty who comes
582 from a society obsessed with the "cult of youth"). A final cause, often
[586] articulated by the islanders, is the fact that divorce is impossible in Ireland, therefore the choice of a spouse must be well considered. It

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appears, however, that this argument is usually used as a rationalization for late marriage, when other causal factors are, in reality, responsible—certainly when "considering" covers two or more decades!

The population of Inis Beag has dropped from a high of 532 persons in 1861 (up 76 from the prefamine census a decade earlier) to 497 in 1881, 483 in 1901, 409 in 1926, 376 in 1956, and 350 when my wife and I were there two years later. Today, there is grave concern over the future of the island, and some folk hold that within another generation or two Inis Beag will have gone the way of the Blasket Islands. Although my wife and I isolated almost two dozen causes for the phenomena of late marriage and celibacy, over thirty interrelated causes pertain to emigration (many of those at work in the marital sphere also stimulate emigration). Once again, I will address only the principal causes and stress the role of sexual repression, dealing first with internal factors and then external ones promoting emigration.

Among internal causes, the previously considered inheritance pattern, parents who want to maintain the family status quo for various reasons, and the girls' and young women's increasing dissatisfaction with their lot figure as prominently in the emigration picture as the marital. Some Inis Beag men claim that the reason male youths are leaving the island is economic depression, caused by the collapse of kelp-making and the fishing industry. But this cause is untenable when one examines the increase in government subsidies, remittances from relatives abroad, and taxation and land rental policies; these have far more than made up for the loss of previous revenue. Real income has increased substantially, despite recent inflation, and young men are very much aware of this fact. Just as late marriage has become institutionalized over the past century, so has emigration since the first large-scale migration of islanders in 1822. Emigration is a way of life, which will stimulate some folk to leave in spite of other conditions which might lead an observer to advise their remaining.

By far the most important reason for Inis Beag's long dwindling population is the total cultural impact of sexual puritanism and the secular "excesses" of the clergy. Blanshard writes, "When all the reasons for a flight from Ireland have been mentioned, there still remains a suspicion that Irish young people are leaving their nation largely because it is a poor place in which to be happy and free. Have the priests created a civilization in which the chief values of youth and love are subordinate to Catholic discipline?" (Blanshard 1954: 154). What "remains a suspicion" to Blanshard is fully confirmed by a wealth of data from Inis

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Beag, only limited amounts of which have been reported in this chapter. Even though sexual repression and fear of the clergy prevent the folk from being outspoken in this matter, it is constantly broached among themselves.

Paramount among external factors stimulating emigration are prosperity on the mainland and abroad, the impact of the mass media of communication, the increasing number of tourists visiting Inis Beag, the return of former emigrants, and the fact that, with an increase in incomes and scholarship funds, more island children are going to the mainland for their schooling each year. America has been a land of freedom and prosperity to the Irish since before the famine, and, until the Second World War, most islanders migrated there never to return. But the growth of prosperity in England following 1946 shifted the stream of emigration in that direction, for not only were jobs plentiful across the Irish Sea, but large, viable ethnic communities served by Irish clergy had sprung up in big cities. And it was possible to visit Ireland frequently, as the distance and cost are slight compared to a journey across the Atlantic. It is common for youths vacationing in Inis Beag from England to talk others into returning with them. The latter declare that they will soon come back to the island to settle permanently, hopefully with "great riches," but they seldom return. Since the war, a number of "Yanks" have also returned home, and their stories of life in America make the youthful islanders restive. Tourists who remain for weeks and months in Inis Beag and come to know many folk also sow the seeds of discontent.

Television was introduced into Inis Beag during 1963, and the two sets now installed always have ready and willing audiences. Almost every cottage has a radio, and, although the islanders seldom read books, a wide assortment of domestic and foreign magazines and newspapers find their way into most homes. These mass media also are an emancipating force making for restiveness and discontent, as they allow the islanders to glimpse behind the "lace curtain" at what appears to be a happier and freer world. Television and radio programs are censored, but, even so, the morality expressed in them—especially the sex and violence drenched American ones—presents a striking contrast to locally conceived moral precepts. A censor from Inis Beag would most certainly create more discontinuities in films with his shears than do his much maligned "secularized" colleagues in Dublin.

Most of what I have written in this essay is to be found expressed in the works of such older Irish writers as James Joyce, Sean O'Casey,